

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 21, 2002**

CONTACT: Milissa Reiersen  
Information Officer  
(615)253-4251 (O)  
(615)308-3705 (C)

## Johnson City Welder Invited by President Bush to be Part of a Panel on Economic Recovery & Job Creation

NASHVILLE—"It's something I'll never forget," said Johnson City welder Randall Riddle after meeting President Bush last week. Riddle was invited to Waco, Texas, for a discussion on economic recovery and job creation.

It all began for Riddle in December 2000 when he was laid off from his job at Burlington textile factory in Johnson City. Riddle soon realized he needed a marketable skill to secure his future so he visited his local career center. Through a collaborative effort among the Northeast Tennessee Career Center partners, Riddle went back to school with the help of NAFTA-Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Workforce Investment Act. He soon achieved a degree in Welding/Metal Fabrications from Northeast State Technical Community College and quickly landed a job at the new Bush Hog plant in Telford.

In May 2002, Riddle's success story was featured in a US Department of Labor video and the next thing he knew he was sitting next to CEOs and presidents of companies from across the nation at the Economic Forum in Waco.

"I learned a lot about politics and the way things are done that I didn't know before. I believe George Bush is going to do his best to create an economic recovery and create more jobs," Riddle said. "I was really impressed with the amount of time he spent with each individual who attended the forum."

Riddle's success story is just one example of the many successes achieved at the Northeast Tennessee Career Center. "This is what we do, we take people who have hit their lowest point, when they lose a job, and show them they can turn their lives around and start over again," said Teresa Broome, Northeast Tennessee Career Center Manager.

**Interviews with Randall Riddle and the Northeast Tennessee Career Center partners are available as well as a picture of Riddle with President Bush.**

--30--

(02-082)

The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

El Departamento del Trabajo y de la Fuerza Laboral es un organismo empresarial que aplica la igualdad de oportunidades. Los servicios y ayudas auxiliares están disponibles para los individuos con impedimentos si los solicitan.